

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

TOM DAVIS, CHAIRMAN



NEWS RELEASE

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Davis Praises TSA's Guidance on Screening Partnership Program

New Rules Grant Greater Flexibilities to Future Contract Screeners

Washington, D.C. – Chairman Davis today welcomed the release of the first of a series of guidance documents on the Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) Screener Partnership Program (SPP), the program that allows airports to opt out of Federal screener services when strict security protocols can be met by contract screeners.

"I am encouraged to learn that, according to the new SPP guidance, TSA will permit management flexibilities to future private screener companies that are broader than those that were allowed for the current firms at the five pilot program airports," said Chairman Davis.

Last November, the General Accounting Office testified at a Committee hearing that the private screener companies were not permitted much flexibility in managing the pilot program airports, which presented difficulty for determining the value of the private programs. Additional work completed by the DHS Office of Inspector General and a BearingPoint study commissioned by TSA confirmed these limitations.

However, according to the SPP guidance, TSA intends to allow private contractors a significant amount of operational control in the areas of supervision, overhead, materials, recruiting, compliance, and scheduling. TSA has also stated that it will allow for greater flexibility in the areas of assessments and technical training than was previously permitted in the Pilot Program.

"Security should remain the number one priority for airport screening services, but if security standards can be met - and done more efficiently than the Federal bureaucracy - then private firms should be encouraged to apply for the opportunity to take on the screening functions at airports," commented Chairman Davis.

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